



Flathead Conservation District
133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT 59901
www.flatheadcd.org 406-752-4220

CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE

Chair Ronald Buentemeier called the November 26, 2018, Business meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the conference room.

Board members present:

Ronald Buentemeier, Chairman; Pete Woll, Vice Chairman; Dean Sirucek, Secretary/Treasurer; John Ellis, Supervisor; Mark Siderius, Supervisor; Verdell Jackson, Supervisor; Lori Curtis, Supervisor, being a quorum of the Board.

Also in attendance were: Valerie Kurth and Ginger Kauffman, FCD staff; Laura Katzman; Sarah Downs; Samantha Tappenbeck, Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM); Sean Johnson, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Brad Bennett, Applied Water; Larry Magone.

MINUTES

A wording correction was made on page 4. Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the minutes of the 11/13/18 310-Stream Permit meeting as corrected.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Email: National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) publications:
NACD eResource, Conservation Clips, Forestry Notes
www.nacdnet.org
2. Email: Montana Watershed Coordination Council newsletter
<https://mtwatersheds.org>
3. Email: Montana Youth Range Camp 2019, June 25-28, 2019, Hyalite Lions Camp, Hyalite Reservoir, south of Bozeman. Registration forms can be found at
www.dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/camps. Cost \$250 + transaction fee. Contact Gallatin Conservation District 406-282-4350.
4. Email: DNRC is advertising for a Conservation District Specialist. Application deadline is December 7. The person in this position will assist conservation districts in planning and implementation of projects, conservation district administration, water reservations, and other conservation district related duties.
<https://mtstatejobs.taleo.net/careersection/200/jobdetail.ftl?job=18142264&tz=GMT-07%3A00>



FINANCIAL

The following bills were reviewed:

1. CenturyLink \$279.00
2. VISA \$2548.46
3. Mountain States Leasing \$1545.56

Mark Siderius motioned “to approve the bills as presented.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT: No one was present to comment on items not listed on the agenda.

Whitefish River Cleanup Presentation: Sarah Downs presented her Girl Scout Silver Award Project, *Kayak Clean*. Sarah and her mother, Laura Katzman, kayaked and cleaned up Whitefish River over a 2-year period. They kayaked over 25 miles of river in sections beginning at Whitefish Lake down to where Whitefish River enters Stillwater River. Sarah noted they removed truckloads of garbage from the river, including a lot of foam from docks. Work will be continued this next summer.

Sarah stated that she would like to begin an Adopt-A-River program and asked if the board had any ideas on how she could keep it going. Supervisors suggested developing an Adopt-A-River Girl Scout badge and contacting local schools. Dean Sirucek noted the article in the Daily Interlake about Xiong Xiong, a Chinese postdoctoral researcher who is spending a year at the Flathead Lake Biological Station studying plastics in water. Sarah stated that there still is a lot of foam in Whitefish River which eventually does go into Flathead Lake. The board thanked and commended Sarah for her work and presentation.

John Ellis motioned “to send a letter to Sarah Downs thanking her for all the work she did in cleaning up the river and for the presentation to Flathead CD on her project.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Discussion held regarding possible future funding to help with the program.

310's

Toth, FL2018066, Swift Creek, bank stabilization: Lori Curtis stated a permit was approved in 2016 for work on Swift Creek, which flows into the north end of Whitefish Lake. The project was not done due to Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) requirements and the permit expired in 2017. The new application is for the same work; however, it will cover 285 feet instead of the original 920 feet. The treatment is the same as what was previously approved. Both Kenny Breidinger and Lori did not think another onsite inspection was needed.

Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the application as submitted.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Lori Curtis motioned “to waive the 15-day waiting period.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



NEW BUSINESS

Cost-Share Program: Valerie Kurth reported that Greg Magone submitted a cost-share application for a reforestation project on 2 acres of land in west valley that was previously cleared. The rest of the property is forested and well-managed. They want to replant the areas to have continuous forest across the entire property. After visiting the site, Dean Sirucek and Valerie proposed splitting up the project over two years to spread out the work and the risk. The east-west section would be done this year, and the Flathead CD cost-share would be \$1775.63. Valerie noted that Mr. Magone is also applying for Environmental Quality Incentive (EQIP) funding through NRCS. If he does receive EQIP funding, the board could reconsider cost share for the following year. Mr. Magone is planning to order seedlings from the nursery at the University of Idaho, and a contractor will do the site preparation and planting.

Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the Magone cost-share project as submitted for the first year in the amount of \$1775.63.” Pete Woll seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sean Johnson, NRCS, noted if the district provides cost share for tree planting, it would eliminate NRCS’s ability to work with Greg on Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funding for tree planting, however, NRCS could still talk to him about weed management.

Logo Discussion: Valerie Kurth explained that the district started a process to re-design the logo about 4 years ago; however, the board decided to stay with the old design. Despite the outcome, we still have the same issues with the current logo. It is not easy to use, does not scale well, cannot go to black and white or grey scale well, and does not transfer well to apparel. Due to these issues, we have had to use other pictures and fonts, but we are inconsistent. Therefore, Valerie thought it might be time to re-start the discussion of a logo re-design. She suggested that getting a new logo with clean lines, font, and a more modern look that would be easy to use and provide consistency across our website, communication materials, and other supplies. To create a more collaborative process, Valerie stated she would like to form a committee of interested supervisors and staff that could bring logo recommendations back to the board. Lori Curtis, Ronald Buentemeier and Verdell Jackson agreed to be on the committee with staff members.

Flathead River Commission (FRC) Responsibilities: Valerie Kurth stated that the FRC is in a rebuilding period right now and would like Flathead CD (FCD), and more specifically, Hailey Graf, to be the point of contact. Mark Siderius stated all FRC information is housed at the FCD. FRC will meet on December 10th and may be going toward more of a standing committee. For email continuity and FRC connectivity, it would be better to have emails sent out from FCD. Currently Mark is the FRC chair and the point of contact, however, his terms on the Flathead CD and FRB boards end 12/31/18.

Mark Siderius motioned “to have Flathead CD and Hailey Graf serve as the point of contact for the Flathead River Commission information.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Dean Sirucek asked about FRC historical papers and current information being placed on FCD computers. Valerie stated this has already been done.

Western Grazing Seminar: Valerie Kurth reported Lake County CD is holding the 2018 Western MT Grazing & Agriculture Conference in Missoula, January 17-18, at the Double Tree hotel in Missoula. Flathead CD sponsored the seminar last year in the amount of \$500. Valerie asked if the board would be interested in supporting the seminar this year and if any supervisors would want to attend.

Pete Woll motioned “to approve \$500 in support of the Western Montana Grazing & Agriculture Seminar.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Montana Lakes Conference (MLC) Scholarship: Lori Curtis stated Whitefish Lake Institute applied for and received a mini-grant from Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM) to provide scholarships for conference attendees. The funding, however, is to be used strictly for lakefront landowners to attend, which limits their ability to provide scholarships to students. Flathead CD is currently sponsoring the conference in the amount of \$1000. Lori explained that they have received requests for scholarships from four non-profit organization employees, four college students, two college students who will present posters, and four high school students. She requested \$3,000 to help these people attend but would be grateful for any assistance the board could provide, given FCD is already a conference sponsor at the \$1,000 level. She really wants to help non-local attendees because it is a statewide conference. Dean Sirucek said he thought they should help the college students attend. Pete Woll asked if college students are from the Flathead. Lori replied that students are from all over the state, but one is definitely from the Flathead.

Dean Sirucek motioned “to approve \$1600 to sponsor college students for the MT Lakes Conference.” Pete Woll seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Appointments & Representatives: Ginger Kauffman stated that at the November 13th meeting, the board requested a list of supervisor terms to review.

It was noted that terms for Lori Curtis and John Ellis don’t end until 12/31/2019. John Ellis stated that he has been reappointed to the City of Whitefish Planning Board.

Dean Sirucek asked about a replacement on the Flathead River Commission since Mark Siderius’s term ends 12/31/2018. Mark stated there is interest, however, the position will have to be advertised.

Ronald Buentemeier expressed concern about filling Mark’s position on the Flathead CD board as well. It was noted that several people have expressed interest.

CPA Engagement Letter for 2018 Annual Financial Report: Ginger Kauffman reported our CPA, Susan Hulslander, has been working on the Annual Financial Report ending June 30, 2018. The Engagement Letter must be formally approved and signed prior to Susan completing the report.



Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the Hulslander & Schmid, CPA’s Engagement Letter with Flathead CD for the Annual Financial Report.” Mark Siderius seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Copy Machine Agreement: Ginger Kauffman reported the current Copier Service Agreement with Anders Business Solutions (ABS) will end 12/31/2018. The current agreement is for \$4278.00 for up to 34,000 black & white (B/W) copies and up to 43,000 color copies. ABS sent two potential agreements for the board to review, and they recommended the one for the lesser amount of \$3821.00 for up to 25, 000 B/W copies and up to 38,000 color copies. Usages to date are: B/W 24,270, color 37,224.

Mark Siderius motioned “to approve the Service Agreement with ABS in the amount of \$3821.00 for 2019.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Records Retention & Disposal Request: Ginger Kauffman reported that districts are legally required to manage their records. Per Conservation District Records Schedule No. 9, documents and files are managed by completing form RM60. Form RM60 must be approved and signed by the district, then submitted to the Local Government Records Committee (LGRC) for disposal or transfer authorization. Ginger noted that some files do not need to be approved by LGRC for disposal, however, they have been listed on the form for tracking purposes. Once the approved form is returned to the district, the records may be properly disposed of.

Mark Siderius motioned “to approve the Records Disposal form.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

End of Month Budget Report (October): The End of Month Report for October was reviewed with the Board.

Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the End of Month Report as of October 31, 2018.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Chair Ronald Buentemeier signed and dated the report.

Dean Sirucek stated when he was in the office to reconcile bank statements, an issue came up regarding Montana Public Employees Retirement Association (MPERA). Ginger Kauffman explained that on 10/16/2018 an MPERA representative called the district and said that the 7/12/2018 MPERA payment/contribution had not been submitted. The representative said the district would be charged with a late fee. In reviewing the files, the payment/contribution had been made to MPERA on 7/12/2018. An explanation and request to remove the late fee was emailed to MPERA on 10/18/2018. Ginger noted that there are several problems with the MPERA Employer Reporting system, one being that it does not provide a confirmation page. Other agencies are also having issues with the system. A response has not yet been received. The board asked to be kept informed.



REPORTS

Flathead CD Staff: Valerie Kurth and Hailey Graf reported:

District Office and Outreach

1. Advertisements: Flathead Beacon - Winter 310, Seedling Program
2. Valerie and Hailey are working on legislator outreach and plans for the upcoming legislative breakfast. They called all Flathead County legislators and mailed them invitations.
3. Hailey attended the Kiwanis meeting and presented on Flathead Conservation District's (FCD)'s education programs.
4. Hailey attended the Flathead Community of Resource Educators (CORE) meeting on November 7th.
5. Hailey attended the first training session for website optimization at Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) on November 19th.
6. Hailey drained and winterized and the Rolling Rivers Trailer. She also completed and submitted the 2018 presentation reports with Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC).
7. Valerie compiled a list of possible discussion topics for the upcoming 310 work session. She also researched 310 vs 124 permit jurisdiction with help from Don MacIntyre.
8. Hailey and Valerie met with the other instructors for the 2019 Small Acreage Landowner Workshop, which will begin in February 2019.
9. Staff worked with Dick Buchanan, Byte Savvy, to transition to Microsoft Office 365 and email exchange server.
10. Valerie attended the Montana Association of Conservation Districts 2019 Convention in Billings. She submitted some of Ronald Buentemeier's historic photos of the F.H. Stoltze Land and Lumber Co. (circa 1920s), and they were displayed on the projector and as a small poster. The Districts passed all three resolutions (310 administrative funding, informational workshops on weed control, and weed control on utility easements). Valerie attended breakout sessions on soil testing, conservation district law, and Montana's changing climate change, as well as tours of a cover crop mixing company and grain distribution facility.

On-the-Ground Projects

Renewable Resource Grant and Loan (RRGL) Program – DNRC released the rankings for this cycle's RRGL applications with the Governor's draft budget. They received 72 regular applications and 4 reconsidered applications (projects that were initially funded in the last session, but had funding pulled in the special session). Of the 76 total, FCD's applications were ranked 6th and 32nd (Trumbull Creek and Krause Creek, respectively), which are both within the draft budget.

Landowner Programs

Cost-Shares

FY19 – Valerie and Dean Sirucek reviewed an application for reforestation. We continue to receive inquiries and applications, especially regarding weed control projects.

Seedling Program – Valerie and Hailey have already processed 10 seedling orders and helped numerous people select appropriate conservation seedlings, including one of our cost-share program participants.



Education and Outreach

Ashley Creek Outreach – Hailey and Valerie met with Constanza von der Pahlen, Flathead Lakers, and Samantha Tappenbeck, Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM) to help Constanza with outreach to landowners along Ashley Creek as part of the Watershed Restoration Plan implementation. Constanza is working on a survey and landowner meeting to solicit input.

Whitefish Independent High – Hailey gave a presentation to students at the Whitefish Independent High School about the FCD's responsibilities and activities. She also discussed different career paths, how to get a job in natural resources, and the FCD scholarship program.

Kalispell After-Care Program – On October 23rd, Hailey led an education program at Elrod School for approximately 30 students, grades K-5. She presented on patterns in nature, how to use a magnifying lens, then led an art project where students traced the vascular system of leaves.

Website/social media

Hailey wrote several new posts for our website and Facebook page on topics including Thanksgiving conservation tips, why larch needles turn yellow and fall off, and how to maintain your septic to prevent water pollution. Website traffic was up from last month and included 399 individual users and 1,037 page-views and Facebook post- reach was 517 for the last 30 days.

Samantha Tappenbeck, **Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM)** reported that Flathead Lakers is holding an Ashley Creek landowner meeting on Tuesday, December 4th, 6:00 - 7:30 P.M., at the Smith Valley Grange Hall. The meeting will provide an opportunity to hear concerns and landowner's history with Ashley Creek, to explore potential restoration projects, and agencies will attend to highlight available resources. A brief survey will be made available at the meeting or can be accessed online. Samantha noted that mailings were sent to landowners along Ashley Creek from the outlet of Ashley Lake to the confluence with Flathead River.

Samantha stated she is also working with the Clark Fork & Kootenai River Basins Council (CFKRBC) to put together a Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP) for the Central Clark Fork Basin. An initial stakeholder meeting has been scheduled for Friday, November 30, 9:00 AM – Noon at the UM campus in Missoula. The proposed geographic scope of the WRP would be from Drummond downstream of the confluence of Flint Creek to the confluence of the Flathead River. Samantha stated this is a very large basin and is a big undertaking. There are 14 impaired streams listed by DEQ in that basin, however, there are many streams in that basin that are potentially priorities for different organizations and agencies to do work on. Samantha noted she would be glad to provide progress reports to the district as the plan is developed.



Dean Sirucek asked if he was correct that all the TMDL's have been completed on all the streams, and just a couple of Restoration Plans. Samantha replied yes. She noted that the Nine Mile WRP within the larger basin has been accepted, and St. Regis has a WRP currently in development.

Natural Resources & Conservation Service (NRCS): Sean Johnson reported:

- **Programs:** Still waiting to hear any progress on the new farm bill and what that will mean for our programs. One version maintained all current programs. One version combined our Conservation Stewardship (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentive (EQIP) programs into one. As of right now, we are not authorized to work on any new CSP programs since we don't know if we will even have it anymore.
 - **EQIP:** Major changes coming to MT EQIP program. Will be switched from Area/Statewide funding pools to a "Targeted Conservation" approach focusing on a resource concern within a determined geographic area. Trying to prevent "random acts of conservation" from occurring. I will be one of a handful of District Conservationists (DC's) throughout the state involved in developing this new process
- **Review Items :**MACD Convention
- **Upcoming Items:** Meeting in Bozeman on how to transition to the new "Targeted Conservation" approach for EQIP
- **Miscellaneous:** The list of applicants for the Kalispell/Eureka work unit DC position was received by the state Thursday November 15th. Interviews are taking place next week

Mark Siderius asked Sean what the "Targeted Conservation" approach will mean for agricultural projects, such as irrigation. Sean replied that this will be discussed at the upcoming meeting. Mark and Sean briefly discussed flexibility in funding of projects.

Dean Sirucek noted that a Statewide TMDL Advisory Group (STAG) meeting will be held in a couple of weeks at which they will discuss priority areas, and that in the past NRCS has attended.

Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD): Pete Woll stated the convention in Billings was compact, so there was not a lot of time to talk with people. All 3 resolutions passed. Dean Sirucek asked if the dues committee was discussed. Pete stated that all committees were discussed. One MACD board member and one staff person will be on every committee to help keep things going.

Flathead County Planning Board (FCPB): Dean Sirucek reported the meeting included 3 zone changes and 2 subdivisions. All passed with positive reviews to go forward to the county commissioners.

Mark Siderius asked about the status of all zone text amendments. Dean explained that the agricultural changes were pulled out and everything else went forward with a positive



review. The agricultural zoning will be addressed in January or February. Mark and Dean briefly discussed rezoning for family transfers of agricultural land.

Whitefish City Planning Board (WCPB): John Ellis reported the meeting included:

1. A request for a Conditional Use Permit to construct a guesthouse in a residential zone.
2. A request to subdivide a property into three parcels.
3. A request for a Conditional Use Permit to construct a new commercial building with ground floor retail space and fourteen residential units.
4. A request for a Planned Unit Development (PUD) land use permit to develop 234 apartments in multiple buildings. John stated access in and out of the property and traffic issues were discussed. This will go to the council in January. Dean Sirucek asked if a traffic study was done. John stated yes over a 3-day period. Two of those days were when school was not in session.

John noted he did amend the conditions of the subdivisions so that any construction activity to build Whitefish trails within 20 feet of the top of the bank must have a 310-permit.

Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC3): Lori Curtis reported the next UC3 meeting will be held on December 12th at the DNRC in Missoula. Lori noted that the Western Governors Association requested she attend the Invasive Mussel Leadership Forum the end of January in Denver. UC3 will pay for the cost.

Haskill Basin Watershed Council (HBWC): Valerie Kurth reported the next will be held November 27th.

Ronald Buentemeier noted that he reviewed the minutes from the last meeting. He thinks the City needs to monitor reservoir seepage because a lot of water is lost, especially on the Murdock property.

Flathead Basin Commission (FBC): Dean Sirucek reported the next meeting will be held January 10th.

Flathead River Commission (FRC): Mark Siderius reported that FRC currently does not have activities to work on or discussion topics to keep members engaged, so they are looking at going to a monitoring/committee status and only meet as needed. They would still have a member that would participate in the River to Lake Initiative. They would also remain engaged to stay current on flood elevation and forecasting, monitor the Columbia River Treaty as it progresses, and monitor the Compact. The next meeting is December 3rd.

Dean Sirucek stated the next Flathead Basin Commission meeting will include an update on the Columbia River Treaty.

Verdell Jackson noted that the FRC should continue a relationship with the dams regarding flood control, as farms lose thousands of dollars due to flooding.



Clark Fork & Kootenai River Basins Council (CFKRBC): Verdell Jackson reported the November 16th meeting was attended by 9 people. The WRP for the Clark Fork and funding for CFKRBC were discussed. Verdell noted that the CFKRBC bill was accepted by the Water Policy Interim Committee, and an annual meeting will be held in Missoula in April.

MATTERS OF THE BOARD/STAFF

- **Legislative Breakfast:** The draft agenda for the Legislative Breakfast was discussed.
- **Whitefish Meeting Letter:** Supervisors will review the draft letter and discuss it at the 310-meeting.
- **310 Work Session:** Wednesday, November 28, 9:00 A.M. in the conference room.

The next 310-Stream Permit meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 10, 2018, 7:00 P.M. The meeting will be held in the conference room of the USDA building at 133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT.

Adjournment: Dean Sirucek motioned “to adjourn.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Submitted By:

Ginger Kauffman
Administrator

Valerie Kurth, Ph. D.
Resource Conservationist

Minutes approved by FCD Board motion made on:

<u>12/20/2018</u>	<u>Ronald Buentemeier</u>	<u>Chair</u>
(Date)	(Signature)	(Title – Chair etc.)

